

The following is the transcript from the workshop of August 20th 2009

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Gaya:)  
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Scath :)  
Gaya Ethaniel: How are you?  
Scathach Rhiadra: fine thank you, and you?  
Gaya Ethaniel: Good thanks :)  
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Stim :)  
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Stim:)  
Stim Morane: hi Gaya and Scathach  
Stim Morane: I hope you are both well today?  
Gaya Ethaniel: Good thanks, yourself?  
Scathach Rhiadra: fine thanks, and you?  
Stim Morane: OK, just busy ...  
Stim Morane: Hi Eliza  
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Eliza :)  
Eliza Madrigal: Greetings! Hi Stim, Scath, Gaya :)  
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello eliza  
Gaya Ethaniel: Do you ever have time when it's not busy Stim?  
Scathach Rhiadra: =^.^=  
Gaya Ethaniel was just curious ...  
Stim Morane: not lately, Gaya  
Stim Morane: Do you?  
Gaya Ethaniel: ah ... ok  
Gaya Ethaniel: It's not really hectic thankfully :)  
Eliza Madrigal: Dao, Hello  
Stim Morane: Hi Dao  
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Dao :)  
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Dao  
Dao Yheng: hello!  
Dao Yheng: new here, trying to figure out how to sit :)  
Stim Morane: thanks, Eliza, Scathach, and Gaya, for your homework reports  
Gaya Ethaniel: Thank you :)  
Eliza Madrigal: :)  
Stim Morane: <http://ways-of-knowing.wik.is/> contains links for these reports, Dao Yheng  
Dao Yheng: thanks, I'll take a look  
Stim Morane: Eliza, shall we discuss your briefly? ... oh, let's wait for Pila  
Eliza Madrigal: Yes, sure  
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Pila :)  
Eliza Madrigal: Hi Pila :)  
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Pila  
Stim Morane: Welcome, Pila  
Pila Mulligan: hi everyone, apologies for being late -- and I am having system problems that may require me to leave unexpectedly :)  
Stim Morane: we were just about to discuss some homework reports, Pila

Pila Mulligan: ok

Stim Morane: Eliza, did you have further thoughts or comments?

Eliza Madrigal: My writing/thinking isn't quite as clear as I'd like here. I edited down various directions quite a bit.

Stim Morane: well, it seems fine to me ... i was just wondering if you wanted to add anything now.

Eliza Madrigal: I do begin to see that it becomes an issue of moment to moment

Eliza Madrigal: rather than getting flooded with a big picture, in some ways?

Stim Morane: that was one of your comments in the posted piece, a question actually.

Stim Morane: starting a bit earlier, must the threats you mention be empty?

Eliza Madrigal: Hm...

Eliza Madrigal: to my thinking giving them gravity is an issue

Stim Morane: yes, certainly

Eliza Madrigal: and if I begin to see that they are not 'actually'

Eliza Madrigal: a weighty obstacle... insurmountable..

Eliza Madrigal: I relax and they can too>

Eliza Madrigal: ?

Stim Morane: I was just wondering how "empty" you think they necessarily are.

Stim Morane: But yes, your comments are very apt.

Eliza Madrigal: Ah :) I do think that I give them the gravity

Eliza Madrigal: the ability to frustrate me

Stim Morane: Of course there is a diff between threats that evaporate when we see them clearly, and threats that are simply put in a new perspective when we see more.

Eliza Madrigal: so it becomes my responsibility

Stim Morane: Yes, you are quite right!

Stim Morane: as for your other question, re 'instant to instant', what do you think now?

Eliza Madrigal: I think this is key, as I see things this second... lessening a sense of 'delay'

Stim Morane: yes

Stim Morane: if you can do it, great?

Eliza Madrigal: in that taking responsibility

Eliza Madrigal: am learning :)

Stim Morane: sorry, i meant to say "great!"

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Stim Morane: but at least it's important to notice this sort of thing at regular intervals

Stim Morane: several times a day, for instance

Stim Morane: true continuity of awareness is a tall order

Eliza Madrigal listens, yes

Stim Morane: I really think some sort of daily meditation practice is essential for the reasons we're discussing now

Eliza Madrigal nods

Stim Morane: does anyone have other thoughts about Eliza's report?

Pila Mulligan: I regret not having had a chance to read it yet

Gaya Ethaniel was wondering if Stim was going to suggest some sort of daily practice to do going forward ...

Gaya Ethaniel: [http://ways-of-knowing.wik.is/3Reports/Eliza\\_Madrigal/Report\\_24](http://ways-of-knowing.wik.is/3Reports/Eliza_Madrigal/Report_24)

Pila Mulligan: thanks Gaya

Gaya Ethaniel: yw :)

Eliza Madrigal: yes Stim is there a particular practice you might point to? I do have a daily practice but would love to refine certainly

Stim Morane: Gaya, it's difficult to recommend something in particular because each of you probably needs your own method

Gaya Ethaniel nods. I do understand your point very well Stim.

Dao Yheng: A question about empty threats?

Stim Morane: I have already suggested some things in prev sessions ...

Stim Morane: Yes, dao?

Gaya Ethaniel nods.

Stim Morane: Do you have a question?

Dao Yheng: Eliza, do you mean you're seeing the threat as empty in a buddhist sense, or in a more conventional sense as in maybe I'm overreacting...?

Dao Yheng: or if both, which is actually more liberating? I ask because I often think the more conventional sense is in some way actually more easy to work with...

Eliza Madrigal: Hm, both perhaps, meaning that I'm sure my definition of 'empty' isn't quite as sophisticated in a buddhist sense, as it might be.... but yes maybe both

Eliza Madrigal: we've been seeing components of things.... leading up to now... so some softening takes place

Dao Yheng: oh, ok, so maybe the distinction between these isn't so pressing in your mind! :)

Eliza Madrigal: yes, sure :)

Dao Yheng: thanks for the clarification!

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Stim Morane: If one truly sees the way these narrowing factors, leading to the identification with the ordinary self, are in fact empty in the so-called buddhist sense, this would be extremely liberating.

Stim Morane: But usually we only see a limited version of this, at most.

Stim Morane: Meanwhile, we must work with what insight we can muster.

Stim Morane: This brings us to Gaya's report ...

Stim Morane: Expanding on a comment I made some time ago, in her latest report Gaya mentions looking into the ways the ordinary sense of self imposes a "posture" on us, body and face stuff etc.

Stim Morane: Gaya, can you mention some examples of what you noticed re this?

Gaya Ethaniel: This is from one of my blog entry - In Tai Chi class this week, one knee had to be forced real hard in order to be bent when I thought I already had done so. But even when I willed it, it was still totally locked in and straight. It was one of those weird occasions when body says no.

Gaya Ethaniel: I sometimes see this happening - being stuck.

Stim Morane: yes

Pila Mulligan: :)

Stim Morane: interesting and relevant

Stim Morane: People do a lot of 'yoga' stretching these days, not realizing that that isn't necessarily the most important factor.

Stim Morane: what really needs to be stretched is actually not in our physical tissue taken in isolation, but in the mind and sense of self, habits, etc

Stim Morane: \*stretched

Gaya Ethaniel: ahhh

Stim Morane: I don't mean to say the body isn't extremely important, just that we have to stretch the

whole person

Stim Morane: it's important to note that not only does this sort of imposed posture of facial expression affect other people, it also affects us! It further cements the hold that "self" has over us, making it seem absolutely real and without exception. it tells us what to feel and think.

Stim Morane: A counteragent could be to deliberately change one's posture, facial expression, etc. This can actually be very helpful, although at times we will want to resist doing so.

Pila Mulligan: a tough question: where do protoplasm and chi meet

Stim Morane: But as i say, we have to make this 'change' quite thorough-going, involving more than just physical tissue

Stim Morane: :)

Stim Morane: beats me.

Pila Mulligan: me to :)

Stim Morane: What do you think, pila?

Pila Mulligan: too\*

Pila Mulligan: in hsing

Pila Mulligan: and ming

Pila Mulligan: but that's not an answer :)

Gaya Ethaniel: So I guess I will have to get mind/body working together, listening to each other well.

Pila Mulligan: yes, Gaya

Stim Morane: the body is entirely chi from one point of view

Pila Mulligan: they speak to you

Stim Morane: yes, true

Stim Morane: I think the distinctions we ordinarily make are only useful for certain specific purposes

Stim Morane: The point is not to claim that there are actually diff substances involved

Stim Morane: but this is a long-standing question, and would involve a very long discussion to sort out.

Pila Mulligan: my rehtorical question arose in the context of Gaya's belief that he rknees were bent

Stim Morane: yes?

Dao Yheng: Apologies, have an appointment -- thanks for letting me join you!

Stim Morane: bye Dao

Dao Yheng: bye

Scathach Rhiadra: bye Dao

Gaya Ethaniel: Would you see physical body as a self [selves] too then? Still not sure re: definition of self.

Eliza Madrigal: Bye Dao :)

Pila Mulligan: bye Dao

Gaya Ethaniel: Bye Dao :)

Stim Morane: gaya, this is an example of the codependent arising issue.

Stim Morane: in a traditional context, the self would not be defined because there is no clear thing which stands in need of a definition, only an apparent self that is associated with certain factors

Stim Morane: one of these factors is the body, yes

Stim Morane: but the body per se is not a self, no.

Gaya Ethaniel nods ... I understand that a bit.

Stim Morane: the Buddha never said there was no 'self'

Stim Morane: he just said it could not be found either in the collection of factors with which it is

associated, nor elsewhere.

Stim Morane: he was being cagey

Stim Morane: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Scathach Rhiadra: :)

Stim Morane: later groups basically said this kind of loose connection is what is meant by codependent arising, and that the latter = "emptiness"

Stim Morane: Emptiness of the self doesn't = nonexistence of self

Stim Morane: so we're not denying the self here, just seeing what it is

Stim Morane: and by doing so, seeing how it constricts us in unnecessary and problematical ways

Stim Morane: Scathach wrote a report that describes this too

Stim Morane: Anyway, I wish us all luck in looking into this, as an example of what we're discussing and as an important part of living well.

Stim Morane: \*discussing

Gaya Ethaniel: Can I ask a question? Actually re: last week ...

Eliza Madrigal: the word instant jumps out in Scath's report too

Gaya Ethaniel: oh I saw cementing in Scath's as my description of 'habit' :)

Eliza Madrigal: hehe

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Eliza Madrigal listens

Stim Morane: well, the limiting effects of these codependent factors is instantaneous

Stim Morane: the remarkable thing is that seeing into it is instantly liberating.

Stim Morane: ever a lifetime pattern is broken this way

Stim Morane: sorry, I meant "even"

Stim Morane: the whole point of the traditional teachings re codependent arising is that it can provide a radically direct way to recover our real nature

Stim Morane: Scathach also mentioned a poem that's relevant here ...

Stim Morane: did you want to comment on this, Scathach?

Stim Morane: one possible implication of the poem is that we are afflicting ourselves.

Scathach Rhiadra: mm, that poem has always stuck in my mind for years, like a description of how we get lost in our thoughts of emotions,

Scathach Rhiadra: or\*

Stim Morane: yes

Scathach Rhiadra: we create our own suffering in a way, and then are victim to it

Stim Morane: yes

Stim Morane: so this is the responsibility issue Eliza mentioned, I guess

Scathach Rhiadra nods

Gaya Ethaniel: Well ... we shouldn't disregard afflictions that are not caused by oneself but if they persistently cause effects afterwards then perhaps we are making our own suffering?

Stim Morane: this is why I asked about the ways such threats are "empty"

Stim Morane: Some of them are literally fantasies ... and can be dropped.

Stim Morane: Others are as real as anything in life is, but still the way they're seen can make a big difference.

Stim Morane: And even this latter category is "empty" in the more Buddhist, technical sense.

Stim Morane: As I said, empty doesn't mean "not real"

Gaya Ethaniel nods ...

Stim Morane: But for now, we'll have to go ...

Stim Morane: Before I forget, the continuity of this workshop will be further broken by the upcoming PaB retreat next week. I won't be here on Thursday as a result. Scathach, could you mention that on the wiki?

Scathach Rhiadra: yes Stim

Stim Morane: And there is another source of sl announcements that would also have to be notified ... ?

Stim Morane: Could someone remind me how to do that ... :)

Scathach Rhiadra: yes the weekly notices, I will be sending that out sunday

Stim Morane: Thanks, Scathach re the wiki and the notices too!

Gaya Ethaniel: Thank you :)

Eliza Madrigal: Thank you Stim, and have a pleasant retreat

Scathach Rhiadra: Storm looks after the website, you could tell him?

Gaya Ethaniel: Thank you Stim. Enjoy the retreat :)

Stim Morane: I'm sorry about the interruptions in our workshop ... the summer is like this every time.

Pila Mulligan: thanks Stim -- best wishes to you and everyone at the retreat

Stim Morane: Thanks, everyone!

Scathach Rhiadra: yes enjoy the retreat:)

Stim Morane: It seems to me you have no specific homework ...

Stim Morane: or too much ...

Gaya Ethaniel: mm ... Stim there was something we wanted to ask

Scathach Rhiadra: :)

Stim Morane: yes, Gaya?

Gaya Ethaniel: >.<

Stim Morane: ?

Gaya Ethaniel: We've been talking in voice on Sundays and wondered if we can do that for Thursdays if you prefer?

Stim Morane: I have no objection, if it's OK with the participants. But I recall Pila, for instance, mentioned a problem re that.

Pila Mulligan: yes, but with Skype it seems okay

Pila Mulligan: I cannot do voice in SL

Stim Morane: I see ... well it sounds like we'd have to work out the technical details

Scathach Rhiadra: skype is better than SL voice anyway

Pila Mulligan: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: That would require you installing Skype Stim. Others are more or less tested.

Scathach Rhiadra: oh it is simple Stim:)

Gaya Ethaniel: Well Sunday regulars really.

Stim Morane: I see. Yet another bit of technology!

Pila Mulligan: Skype also has chat

Scathach Rhiadra: =^.^=

Eliza Madrigal: :) So simple even Eliza can do it

Pila Mulligan: chat -- like SL

Gaya Ethaniel: Anyway, we thought we mention it as you once wanted to teach in voice instead of chat.

Stim Morane: OK, I'll give it a try ... but this brings up other issues. I am not planning on doing this particular workshop much longer.

Scathach Rhiadra: oh?

Pila Mulligan: oh no

Stim Morane: So we need to discuss various things before going ahead.

Stim Morane: None of these cafe workshops should really be considered very "on-going"

Pila Mulligan: maybe we can trasnitoin to a new format/workshop

Pila Mulligan: outsid eof Kira

Stim Morane: I originally conceived this as involving 6 sessions or so

Stim Morane: well, we can discuss this next time or outside the meeting, somehow

Pila Mulligan: :)

Stim Morane: see you all soon, I hope.

Pila Mulligan: bye Stim

Gaya Ethaniel: Thank you :)

Eliza Madrigal: Thanks again Stim, Bye

Scathach Rhiadra: good night Stim, thank you:)

Stim Morane: Bye and good luck to all of you, and those we only hear about indirectly!

Gaya Ethaniel: :)